

TX, Tom Osburn, who died on August 6, 2004.

Tom Osburn was a selfless and devoted servant to the community of Sherman. Community leaders remember him as a man who worked constantly for the good of Sherman. If there was a problem, Tom was ready and willing to fix it. Friends recall that he was instrumental in getting a new building for the Texoma Council of Governments when a mold-infestation was discovered in the old building. The Old Settler's Park in Sherman was getting run down, so Tom led an effort to renovate the facility. He also made citizens feel as if they were integral to the success of the community. Rev. Jim Pledger stressed that Tom was a good mentor who encouraged people, through events like Great Days of Service, to give back to Sherman.

Tom and his wife, Jo Ann, arrived in Sherman in 1990. Tom served as TXU's district manager for the Texoma District. The Osburns quickly became an integral part of the community. In addition to serving as Mayor from 1999–2003, he was a member of the city council from 1998–2003. Tom also served on the Board of Directors of the Sherman Chamber of Commerce, the Boy Scouts of America, the American Cancer Society, the United Way, the Texoma Area Paratransit System, the Grayson County Rehabilitation Center, the Sherman Minority Recruitment Scholarship Foundation, and the Grayson County Juvenile Alternatives. Tom further gave his time and energies to the community as chairman of the Administrative Board of the First United Methodist Church, chairman of the Wilson N. Jones Memorial Hospital Foundation, and president of the Sherman Rotary Club. He served as president of the Board of Directors of the Texoma Council of Governments, and it isn't surprising that he was chosen this year as the Texoma Council of Government's Person of the Year for Grayson County.

Tom was a devoted family man. He met his wife, Jo Ann, at New London High School. They both graduated from the University of Texas at Austin after Tom played college basketball at Tyler Junior College, where his team took second place in the nation. Besides Jo Ann, Tom is survived by three children, Chris, Tim, and Beth, five grandchildren, and a sister, Pat Sager of Tyler.

The community of Sherman feels a deep and abiding loss by the death of Tom Osburn. Rarely has an individual made such a lasting and permanent mark on a town and its citizens. On behalf of his many friends and fans, and the community of Sherman, I want to take this opportunity in the House of Representatives to pay our last respects to this honorable man—Tom Osburn.

HONORING J.D. ROGERS

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to pay tribute to Mr. J.D. Rogers III, who on September 18, 2004, will be honored during the UAW Local 599 Walter Reuther award ceremony in Flint, MI, for his contributions as the longest serving production committeeman in the history of the local.

J.D. Rogers began his leadership career within UAW local 599 in 1976 when he was elected as alternative committeeman. One month after assuming his post he was elected to fulfill the position of the recently resigned committeeman. His superior leadership skills and support of the union membership granted him several unopposed elections to this post.

J.D. is committed to fulfilling Walter Reuther's mission of helping people, and ensuring human dignity and social justice for all. His hard work and dedication to the duties of his elected position is commendable. His deeds are self evident in the faith the members of 599 have bestowed upon him in allowing him to be re-elected. His service to the UAW extends many years and is highly regarded.

Mr. Speaker, many people have greatly benefited from the leadership and service of Mr. J.D. Rogers. His commitment to the UAW membership is unwavering. I ask my colleagues in the 108th Congress to please join me in congratulating him on obtaining his mark in history and in wishing him the very best in future endeavors.

HONORING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I recognize Hispanic Heritage Month, which begins on September 15, the anniversary of independence for five Latin American countries—Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Additionally, Mexico declared its independence on September 16, and Chile on September 18. These are some of the countries that comprise our diverse ethnic group, which have enriched our beautiful Nation.

The 2000 Census found that 35.3 million people identified themselves as Hispanic Americans. This represents a 58-percent increase from the previous Census of 1990. Hispanic Americans continue to thrive and exemplify the American dream. A larger percentage of Hispanic Americans are becoming proud homeowners. Hispanic-owned companies made up 6 percent of the Nation's 20.8 million nonfarm businesses, and earned \$186.3 billion in revenues. Since 1822, 73 Hispanic Americans have served in this very Chamber, in the U.S. House of Representatives.

In March of last year, the Congressional Hispanic Conference, of which I am proud to serve as chair, was inaugurated. We are comprised of a group of Representatives of Hispanic and Portuguese descent, as well as Members who are interested in promoting policies of importance to Americans of Latino descent. The Conference will inform Hispanic Americans that their issues and concerns are being listened to and acted upon in the U.S. Congress. Lower taxes, affordable health care, and the education of our youth are all issues that are imperative to our conservative values. We will be strong advocates to ensure that the largest minority group in the United States has a loud and powerful voice in the Halls of Congress.

Educational advancement and funding continues to be an important issue for all Ameri-

cans, especially Hispanics. Congress has increased funding for Hispanic Serving Institutions by more than 750 percent—from \$10.8 million in 1996 to \$92.4 million in 2003. The Bush administration has also proposed an additional 5-percent increase in funding for minority serving institutions in FY05. This would increase funding for Hispanic Serving Institutions to \$94 million. This vital funding works to advance the educational pursuits of Hispanic Americans across our country.

Congress continues to amend and improve tax policy to the benefit of all Americans. H.R. 839, The Renewing the Dream Tax Credit Act, modifies the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow an income tax credit for the provision of homeownership and community development. This bill would create tax incentives for the construction or rehabilitation of affordable housing for low-income families. The ability to afford and own your own home is a quintessential part of living and pursuing the American dream.

This Congress and our President are committed to ensuring that Hispanic Americans continue to seek economic opportunities and achieve prosperity. The huge increases in educational funding are unprecedented and will continue to serve the needs of the ever-growing Hispanic American community. A stronger, smarter, and fairer tax policy will continue to serve the needs of all Americans. A vibrant, stronger, and more educated Hispanic American population contributes to the greatness of this wonderful nation making us competitive for the new global economy in this technologically advanced society.

INTRODUCTION OF THE VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT ACT OF 2004

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Veterans' Employment Act of 2004. Our veterans too often see limitations in the availability of civilian employment opportunities. While federal service positions offer preference to veterans, this provision is not universal in private industry. For many seeking a position in the private sector, the search for employment proves long and arduous.

During their time in the service, our veterans acquire several personal attributes that private employers find imperative in today's business world. While serving in the armed services, these men and women consistently demonstrate a high level of adaptability; the ability to work within a team; a strong work ethic; and, more often than not, exemplary leadership qualities. Alongside the extensive technical and strategic training sustained during their service, the character displayed by our veterans should be sufficient to secure them steady employment. Unfortunately, we have too often been shown that this is not the case.

During my tenure in Congress, many of my constituents have expressed to me their frustration with the availability of steady, well paid employment opportunities. Unlike their non-veteran contemporaries, they often find employers unfamiliar with the extensive training and exemplary personal attributes accumulated during their years of service. With their

skill sets and experience, our veterans most certainly deserve broader employment opportunities.

In response to this need for increased employment opportunities, I am honored to introduce the Veterans' Employment Act of 2004. It is my strong belief that our veterans provide some of the most valuable service both within and outside of our armed services. With support of this bill, we may further expand the employment opportunities available to our veterans and ensure the strength and reputation of America's private industries.

RECOGNIZING DR. CHARLES R. DREW, PROFESSOR OF SURGERY AT HOWARD UNIVERSITY AND PIONEER IN THE FIELD OF MEDICINE; 1904–1950

HON. J. RANDY FORBES

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Dr. Charles R. Drew, pioneer in the field of medicine, professor of surgery, and innovator of the modern blood bank.

Dr. Drew, born 1904 in Washington, D.C., excelled academically. He received a Bachelor of Arts from Amherst College, Medical Doctorate and Master of Surgery degrees from McGill University, and a Doctor of Science in Medicine degree from Columbia University.

Dr. Drew was an outstanding athlete, starting in football and track at Dunbar High School and Amherst College. He received the Thomas W. Ashley Memorial Trophy for being the football team's most valuable player and achieved honorable mention All-American honors in football. He became an all-time leading scorer in intercollegiate track while attending McGill Medical College.

As a surgeon and specialist in blood research, in 1940 Dr. Drew organized the massive Blood for Britain project, in which blood plasma was separated, collected, and stored to aid the wounded in World War II. The following year he became director for the national American Red Cross program for blood procurement.

Dr. Drew is credited with organizing the concept of the blood bank. Dr. Drew pioneered the use of blood plasma for transfusion due to the longer life of blood with the plasma removed. Prior to his studies, blood could only be stored for seven days. Dr. Drew developed "bloodmobile" trucks with refrigeration units to collect and carry plasma, increasing the shelf life of blood. His blood bank in the Presbyterian Hospital in New York served as one of the models for the widespread system of blood banks used by the American Red Cross today. Countless lives were saved thanks to Dr. Drew's efforts in blood research and plasma separation.

Dr. Drew served as Professor of Surgery at Howard University and Chief Surgeon of its teaching and clinical facility, Freedmen's Hospital. There he trained America's first generation of black surgeons.

Dr. Drew was inducted into the Alpha Psi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity while attending Amherst College. While on the faculty of Howard University, he collaborated in the writing and composition of the fraternity's hymn, "Omega Dear."

Dr. Drew succeeded in each phase of his life being an outstanding example of African-American achievement. He left behind a legacy of life saving techniques.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Dr. Charles R. Drew for his pioneering achievements in blood research; his commitment to Howard University, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, and his community; and for the many contributions he has made to our nation. It is truly an honor and a privilege to recognize Dr. Charles R. Drew in the United States House of Representatives on this day.

REMEMBERING THE "HELL ON WHEELS"

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, three and a half months after the D-Day invasion of June 6, 1944 and nearly 1,000 miles away from the beaches of Normandy, France, the United States 2nd Armored Division—an outfit known as "Hell on Wheels" for its nucleus of tank units, the leadership of Major General George Patton, and its elite corps of servicemen—found its way to the Netherlands city of Sittard on September 19, 1944. Here, in the southernmost province of The Netherlands, close to the Belgian and German border, the "Hell on Wheels" battalion waged war against the Nazi's that for four years had forced their fascist values upon the people of that city.

When the battle was over, America lost at least sixty-two of the bravest men ever to wear our uniform. One account of the battle's outcome went like this: "Here they (the "Hell on Wheels") received an overwhelming welcome by crowds of Dutch, euphoric citizens liberated free again after four long years of German fascist occupation, saving them from the hardships like the citizens of Amsterdam had still to endure because of shortages of food and fuel during the entire coming, unusual severe winter."

Accounts of what exactly occurred and how many servicemen died in Sittard are not entirely known. The National Personnel Records Center, which houses personal files for veterans of World War II was unable to provide more information about soldiers potentially lost during the battle in Sittard due to a fire at their St. Louis Records Center in 1973.

Still, we know that the men who died that day did not yearn to be heroes or to have a memorial dedicated in their honor. They came from all walks of life and all regions of America, including from my home state of New Jersey, to serve in the Armed Forces and defend freedom. They yearned for reaching Berlin, winning the war and enjoying their homecomings. And they dreamed of seeing their parents, wives and newborn babies.

This weekend, American families, friends and descendants of the sixty-two "Hell on Wheels" servicemen who lost their lives, as well as residents of Sittard (now known as Sittard-Geleen), past and present, will come together in Sittard-Geleen to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the city's freedom due in large part to the bravery of these sixty-two American souls who will never be forgotten.

Together, they are unveiling a fitting memorial in this Dutch city to honor the service,

bravery and sacrifice of these servicemen. One account about the new memorial said: "It will be made famous, hard stone excavated in the very heart of the Ardennes, a notorious battlefield, where such great courage and perseverance were shown that we shall never forget."

This memorial service has been a long time coming. In a joint effort, that spanned nearly a year, the U.S. Ambassador to the Netherlands, Clifford Sobel, Arno Bemelmans, a local Dutchman and the Foundation Chairman for the new memorial, two Army Genealogists—Charles Gailey and Arvan Staats—we discovered in a recent Washington Post article, and myself put forth an all out effort to track down and notify as many family members related to the "Hell on Wheels" soldiers as possible about the memorial dedication. Through our efforts, we successfully reached family members for 25 of the 62 deceased servicemen.

For all, including myself, dedicating this memorial means an opportunity to pay respects to those who gave everything to defend freedom. For some, it also means the chance to possibly recognize the name of another soldier's relative they once may have heard about in a letter or telegraph home or in a journal entry recovered years later, or to remember a face, voice or even a memory from a lifetime ago.

Today, let us honor each of sixty-two servicemen from the "Hell on Wheels" battalion who lost their lives in Sittard by pledging this: Only through preserving our past can we guarantee a future where the lessons and legacy of these servicemen will be rightfully remembered.

For this to be true, I'm reminded of what the patriot Thomas Paine observed more than 220 years ago as our forefathers fought to gain their own freedom for the first time.

Paine said: "Those who expect to reap the blessing of freedom must undergo the fatigue of supporting it."

As we honor our hero soldiers this weekend in the Netherlands, we must not forget that "freedom is not free." It is worth fighting for, and those who fought must be remembered and honored forever.

In the end, the remaining servicemen from "Hell on Wheels" battalion did cross the German border to meet the enemy on their own soil. They played a crucial role in the Battle of the Bulge and finally crossed the Rhine River in 1945 to free thousands of prisoners of war and slave laborers.

History books may never report what the "Hell on Wheels" battalion accomplished in Sittard. Future generations may never know what happened in this city or at dozens, maybe even hundreds, of other battlefields like it across Europe. But for this moment, this weekend, let us all remember with a heavy heart the "Hell on Wheels 62."

TRIBUTE TO PRIVATE FIRST CLASS KEN W. LEISTEN

HON. DARLENE HOOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I want to pay tribute to the life of an Oregon Soldier, beloved patriot, and proud son. Private First Class Ken W. Leisten was recently